

2025 HB1218 Testimony For 2025-02-21.pdf

Uploaded by: Alan Lang

Position: FAV

Testimony For HB1218

Honorable Delegates

I support

- Establishing the Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland to study and make recommendations on the State's current and future electricity needs under various scenarios:
- prohibiting the Public Service Commission from approving the construction or expansion of transmission lines in the State from July 1, 2025, through May 1, 2026; and
- requiring the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 31, 2025.

We should not allow new transmission lines to be built that pass through Maryland unless they provide electricity to Maryland residents. Also, when allowed, ways should be found to use existing towers for these transmission lines as much as possible so that valuable farm land and businesses are not ruined.

Please enter a favorable report for HB1218.

Alan Lang
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February 21, 2025

Testimony in Support of HB1218.pdf

Uploaded by: Brenda Myers

Position: FAV

Testimony in Support of HB1218

Chair, Members of the Committee:

I strongly urge you to support HB1218, a bill that temporarily halts the approval of new transmission lines in Maryland until **May 2026** and establishes the **Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland**. This bill is essential to ensuring that energy infrastructure decisions are based on **comprehensive analysis and public interest—not corporate expansion agendas**.

Key Provisions of HB1218

This bill requires a **fact-based assessment** of Maryland's energy future by evaluating:

- Forecasted **electricity needs** for 2026, 2030, 2035, and 2040.
- Maryland's **dependence on out-of-state electricity imports** and strategies to reduce it.
- **Cost estimates** for ratepayers under different energy supply scenarios.
- **Policy recommendations** to improve energy independence and efficiency.
- **Alternative strategies**, including nuclear expansion, renewable energy, and energy storage.

HB1218 as a Direct Challenge to MPRP

The **Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP)** is a highly controversial transmission expansion that would **seize private land, devalue properties, and impose long-term environmental and economic harm**—without clear evidence that it is necessary.

HB1218 creates a **direct roadblock** to MPRP by:

- **Prohibiting the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC)** from approving new transmission projects while the task force develops a **data-driven energy plan**.

- Preventing **PJM Interconnection and utility interests** from fast-tracking MPRP without proper review of its necessity or alternatives.
- Ensuring that Maryland considers **localized energy solutions** before committing to massive transmission expansion.

Beyond MPRP: A Better Energy Future for Maryland

HB1218 does more than stop one project—it **redefines how Maryland plans its energy future** by ensuring:

- **Transmission expansion is not the default solution**—Maryland must prioritize **local energy generation, grid efficiency, and modernization**.
- **Communities and landowners have a voice**—Utility companies cannot **dictate infrastructure projects** without public input.
- **Maryland moves toward energy independence**—Reducing reliance on imported electricity will enhance **resilience, cost-effectiveness, and environmental sustainability**.

Conclusion

HB1218 is a necessary step to **pause reckless transmission expansion and prioritize thoughtful, long-term energy planning**. Instead of allowing **utility-driven projects** to dictate Maryland's energy future, we must ensure **every project serves the public interest**.

I respectfully urge you to **support HB1218** to protect Maryland's communities, economy, and energy security.

Thank you,

Brenda Myers

hb1218 price 219.pdf

Uploaded by: Brysn Price

Position: FAV

February 28, 2025

Dear Members of the Maryland General Assembly,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB1218, a bill that is not just necessary but long overdue in ensuring Maryland's energy future is built on facts, transparency, and community-driven planning rather than corporate convenience. For too long, transmission projects have been pushed forward without rigorous analysis of necessity, alternative solutions, or long-term consequences. The Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP) is the latest and most urgent example of this broken process; however, without HB1218, it will not be the last.

HB1218 takes the rational and responsible approach of halting all new transmission line approvals until May 2026 while a Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland conducts a comprehensive review of our state's energy needs. This review will examine forecasts for 2026, 2030, 2035, and 2040; assess Maryland's dependence on imported electricity; and explore cost-effective energy supply options, including nuclear, renewables, and storage solutions. In other words, HB1218 ensures we plan for the future with real data rather than allowing utilities to dictate our energy policies based on their financial interests.

The need for this bill is best illustrated by the MPRP, a project that threatens to seize private land, devalue properties, and impose long-term environmental and economic damage; all while Maryland continues to import a massive percentage of its electricity rather than investing in self-sufficiency. When Delegate Mangione pressed PSEG on whether they had explored alternatives to new transmission, they admitted they had not even considered it until public outcry forced them to. Only after being questioned did they rush to produce a study that conveniently reaffirmed their original plan. This is not how responsible energy planning should work.

The homeowners, farmers, and families in the path of MPRP are living in limbo, unsure if their land will be taken, if their financial security will collapse, or if their communities will be permanently scarred; all for a project whose necessity has not been fully vetted. It is unacceptable that residents must fight tooth and nail after a project has been proposed just to get the basic answers that should have been required from the start. HB1218 corrects this backward process by ensuring Maryland conducts real planning before authorizing massive, landscape-altering infrastructure.

This bill does not just stop MPRP; it protects Maryland from future transmission overreach. By requiring a pause in approvals, HB1218 ensures that future projects are built only when they are truly necessary, cost-effective, and aligned with Maryland's long-term energy

goals. No longer will transmission expansion be the default solution when better alternatives exist. Maryland must first invest in local energy generation to reduce its dependence on imported electricity; modernize the existing grid before carving up private land for new transmission corridors; and protect property owners from unnecessary and unfair eminent domain claims.

In addition to preventing unnecessary transmission expansion, HB1218 ensures that Maryland's energy strategy keeps pace with rapid technological advancements. One of the most frequently cited justifications for large-scale grid expansion has been the expectation of skyrocketing power consumption, particularly due to the rise of artificial intelligence and data centers. However, recent advancements in AI efficiency and chip technology have significantly reduced power consumption projections; what once appeared to be an impending surge in demand is now being reconsidered by energy analysts worldwide.

Maryland must ensure that we are solving today's energy challenges, not building costly, outdated infrastructure to address problems that may never materialize at the scale once predicted. The rapid evolution of AI and cloud computing demonstrates how quickly assumptions about future electricity needs can become obsolete. Rather than locking ourselves into unnecessary transmission expansion based on outdated models, HB1218 ensures that our energy planning reflects the most current and accurate data available.

We must ask ourselves who benefits when transmission projects are fast-tracked without a complete picture of our state's energy future. The answer is not the ratepayers, landowners, or local communities; it is the utilities and transmission developers who profit from large-scale expansion, regardless of whether it is actually needed. HB1218 puts the power back where it belongs in the hands of data-driven decision-making and public accountability.

Maryland has the opportunity to be a national leader in responsible energy planning. We can choose facts over assumptions; fairness over expediency; and long-term stability over short-term profits. But to do that, we must act now. I urge you to vote in favor of HB1218 to ensure Maryland's energy infrastructure serves its people, not just its corporations.

Thank you.

Bryan Price

HB 1218-Transmission Lines and Task Force to Devel

Uploaded by: Elizabeth Law

Position: FAV

BILL NUMBER: **HB 1218**
Construction and Expansion of Transmission Lines and Task
Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland

COMMITTEE: **Economic Matters**

HEARING DATE: **February 21, 2025**

SPONSOR: **Delegates Buckel, Griffith, Mangione, Miller, Pippy, Reilly,**
and Tomlinson

POSITION: **Favorable**

Chair C. T. Wilson, Vice Chair Brian M. Crosby and Members of the Committee,

As a resident of Maryland and a professional electric power engineer I ask for a favorable report on Bill HB 1218 - Construction and Expansion of Transmission Lines and Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland.

Before Maryland goes down the Virginia's disastrous road, we need to stop and consider the ramifications of the power demands being made on our state and determine how to blend high energy use industries into our business fabric without burdening rate payers.

HB 1218 is a reasonable call to plan before proceeding by requiring a prohibition on the Public Service Commission to hold on any CPCN approval of new or expanding transmission lines.

The Task Force specified in the Bill will assemble our state's experts and advocates in the fields of power systems, the environment and economics. During the period of review the wild swing of information that we are experiencing in the news can be digested, resulting in a reasonable way forward.

Maryland already imports 40% of the power we use. This means that any new high energy use industry like hyperscale datacenters will require either multiple 500 kV transmission lines or gas/steam combined cycle power plants that can provide 2000 or more megawatts.

Before we see multiple MPRP transmission lines invading our countryside, we need to understand and plan and then enact a realistic energy plan forward.

I ask for a favorable report.

Elizabeth Law, P.E.

1758 Wheyfield Dr.

Frederick, MD 21701

FAV_HB1218_StopMPRPInc.pdf

Uploaded by: Joanne Frederick

Position: FAV



WRITTEN TESTIMONY

BILL NO.: House Bill 1218 – Construction and Expansion of Transmission Lines and Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland

COMMITTEE: Economic Matters Committee

HEARING DATE: February 21, 2025

SPONSOR: Delegates Buckel, Griffith, Mangione, Miller, Pippy, Reilly, and Tomlinson

POSITION: Favorable

I respectfully submit this testimony in **strong support** of House Bill 1218, which establishes a **Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland** and prohibits the approval of new transmission line projects for a critical period of review. This legislation is **essential** to ensuring Maryland's energy infrastructure planning is driven by thoughtful, data-backed policies rather than rushed, harmful projects like the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP). I urge a **favorable report** on this bill to protect Maryland's environment, farmland, and communities from irreparable harm.

The Destruction Wrought by the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP)

The **MPRP is an environmental and economic catastrophe in the making**. This project, proposed by PSEG Renewable Transmission LLC, would construct a **67.2-mile-long, 500 kV overhead transmission line** through Baltimore, Carroll, and Frederick Counties. The devastating consequences of this project, as detailed in environmental impact studies, cannot be overstated:

- **Massive Land Destruction:**
 - **394.2 acres of forest** would be clear-cut.
 - **522.6 acres of active farmland** would be permanently degraded.
 - **245.8 acres of conservation easements**, including **224.6 acres protected under the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF)**, would be violated.
- **Waterways and Wetlands at Risk:**
 - The project crosses **101 streams and waterbodies**, increasing erosion, sediment pollution, and flood risks.
 - **51.1 acres of wetlands** would be impacted, degrading natural flood control systems.



- The project threatens **endangered species habitats**, including those of the Indiana Bat, Northern Long-eared Bat, and Bog Turtle.
- **Destruction from Access Roads:**
 - **303 access roads, each 16 to 25 feet wide**, will carve through farmland and forests, further fragmenting ecosystems.
 - **140 acres of land will be lost to road construction**, permanently altering hydrology and soil quality.
 - Increased runoff and erosion will harm the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- **Threats to Maryland's Historic and Scenic Landscape:**
 - **Twelve historic sites and two historic districts** lie within the proposed route, jeopardizing Maryland's rich heritage.
 - Overhead lines and steel towers, some up to **195 feet tall**, will destroy scenic vistas, undermining tourism and property values.

The Economic and Social Costs of This Project

Maryland's rural economy **depends on its farmland, natural beauty, and thriving communities**. The MPRP's destruction will have long-term consequences:

- **Farmland Irreversibly Damaged:** Compacted soil and hydrological disruptions will **permanently reduce agricultural productivity**.
- **Plummeting Property Values:** Home values near transmission lines **drop by 45%**¹ disincentivizing new residents and investment.
- **Lost Tourism and Recreation Revenue:** Outdoor recreation, a vital economic driver, will suffer as scenic landscapes are **marred by industrial infrastructure**.

HB1218: A Critical Step to Protect Maryland's Future

House Bill 1218 is **not just necessary—it is urgent**. By prohibiting the approval of new transmission projects for a set period, this bill **ensures that Maryland develops a**

¹ *The Electrifying Factor Affecting Your Property's Value*, Wall Street Journal (August 15, 2018), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-electrifying-factor-affecting-your-property-s-value-1534343506> (reporting that vacant lots adjacent to high-voltage transmission lines sell for 45% less than equivalent lots not located near transmission lines. Non-adjacent lots still located within 1,000 feet of transmission lines sell at a discount of 18%).



rational, forward-thinking energy plan that balances reliability, environmental protection, and economic stability.

The Task Force created by HB1218 will:

- Conduct a **comprehensive review** of Maryland's electricity needs.
- Assess **realistic alternatives** to new transmission, such as energy efficiency, distributed generation, and grid modernization.
- Evaluate **the economic and environmental costs** of large-scale infrastructure projects before they are greenlit.

Conclusion

Without HB1218, projects like the MPRP will continue to **destroy Maryland's land, threaten its communities, and undermine its economy**—all without guaranteeing true energy reliability. We cannot allow corporate interests to dictate our state's future at the expense of our farmland, forests, and history.

For these reasons, I **strongly urge** the committee to **issue a favorable report on HB1218**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Frederick

President

Stop MPRP, Inc.

joanne.frederick@stopmprp.org

443.789.1382

PHI HB 1218 Construction and Expansion of Transmis

Uploaded by: Allyson Black-Woodson

Position: UNF



February 21, 2025

112 West Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Oppose – House Bill 1218 – Construction and Expansion of Transmission Lines and Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland

Potomac Electric Power Company (Pepco) and Delmarva Power & Light Company (Delmarva Power) oppose **House Bill 1218 Construction and Expansion of Transmission Lines and Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland**. House Bill 1218 establishes the Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland to study and make recommendations on the state's current and future electricity needs. The bill prohibits the Public Service Commission (Commission) from approving the construction or expansion of transmission lines in the state from July 1, 2025 through May 1, 2026.

While Pepco and Delmarva Power are notionally supportive of a collaborative and comprehensive assessment of the state's electricity needs to determine effective and viable solutions, this bill would create substantial delays to critical infrastructure projects and inadvertently further exacerbate the state's resource adequacy challenges.

The provision of the bill that would prevent the Commission from approving construction or expansion of transmission lines from July 1, 2025 through May 1, 2026 would not only directly affect transmission projects, but could also have a significant indirect impact on future energy and capacity prices, ultimately increasing cost for consumers. Such a requirement would delay or cancel future transmission projects and could prevent utilities from constructing the necessary upgrades required to allow new generators to interconnect to the grid and provide much needed electricity to Maryland customers. Maryland is a net importer of generation with two major power plants set to retire. While the bill purports to limit Maryland's reliance on out-of-state electricity imports to no more than 25%, the real impact would exacerbate the resource adequacy challenges that Maryland is already facing. With fewer energy resources available to meet demand, both energy and capacity prices could rise, resulting in Maryland's need to import even more energy to supply its residents and businesses. This is counterproductive to efforts the state is making to identify long-term solutions to effectively address resource adequacy needs.

For these reasons, Pepco and Delmarva Power respectfully urge an unfavorable report for House Bill 1218.

BGE_ECM_OPP_HB1218_ConstructionExpansionTransmissi

Uploaded by: Brittany Jones

Position: UNF

Oppose
Economic Matters
2/21/2025

House Bill 1218 – Construction and Expansion of Transmission Lines and Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland

Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (BGE) opposes *House Bill 1218 – Construction and Expansion of Transmission Lines and Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland*. House Bill 1218 establishes the Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland to study and make recommendations on the state's current and future electricity needs. The bill prohibits the Public Service Commission (PSC) from approving the construction or expansion of transmission lines in the state from July 1, 2025 through May 1, 2026.

BGE has significant concerns with prohibiting the approval of required transmission projects that are needed to keep the lights on in central Maryland. Specifically, BGE has been directed by PJM, the Regional Transmission Operator (RTO) in which Maryland is a member, to construct a new overhead transmission line on existing BGE ROW from Pennsylvania into Anne Arundel County, Maryland to help mitigate severe, widespread reliability violations caused by the retirement of the coal-burning power plant, Brandon Shores. Maryland must import electricity from Pennsylvania via a new transmission line; otherwise without Brandon Shores Power Plant in service, PJM system studies indicate that the State and the region could face uncontrolled cascading outages. Without timely execution of the required transmission upgrades, the Brandon Shores Power Plant will need to remain in service longer than necessary, resulting in further increases to BGE and Maryland electric customer bills in order to keep the plant operating past its expected retirement date. House Bill 1218 will directly prevent the timely approval of BGE's CPCN filing for the Brandon Shores Mitigation Project and may delay other BGE projects as well that are needed to maintain the safety and reliability of the transmission grid.

It is important to note that until BGE completes this project, ratepayers are forced to pay a premium rate to Talen Energy, the owner and operator of the Brandon Shores and Wagner power plant, to remain operational to avoid brown-outs. This is known as the Reliability-Must-Run (RMR) agreement. So, the longer it takes BGE to construct this new line, the longer ratepayers will bear this burden.

BGE urges an unfavorable report on House Bill 1218 due to the disadvantages it brings to the State's reliability and the undue burden placed on ratepayers.

BGE, headquartered in Baltimore, is Maryland's largest gas and electric utility, delivering power to more than 1.3 million electric customers and more than 700,000 natural gas customers in central Maryland. The company's approximately 3,400 employees are committed to the safe and reliable delivery of gas and electricity, as well as enhanced energy management, conservation, environmental stewardship and community assistance. BGE is a subsidiary of Exelon Corporation (NYSE: EXC), the nation's largest energy delivery company.

Charles Washington | Brittany Jones | Guy Andes | Dytonia Reed | 410.269.5281

HB1218 - UNF - Construction and Expansion of Trans

Uploaded by: Landon Fahrige

Position: UNF



Maryland

Energy Administration

TO: Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee
FROM: MEA
SUBJECT: HB 1218 - Construction and Expansion of Transmission Lines and Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland
DATE: February 21, 2025

MEA Position: UNFAVORABLE

House Bill 1218 establishes a Task Force to develop a realistic electric plan for Maryland to study & make recommendations on the State's current and future electricity needs and prohibits the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) from approving the construction or expansion of transmission lines in the State from July 1, 2025, through May 1, 2026.

The bill as written poses significant risks to the state's energy infrastructure, affordability, and reliability. The proposed moratorium on the construction and expansion of transmission lines could jeopardize critical projects like the Brandon Shores Mitigation Project, which are essential for maintaining grid reliability in the Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE) zone. Delays in this project would extend the use of costly Reliability Must Run (RMR) agreements, increasing electricity costs for Maryland residents.

The bill's directive to limit policy options to in-state nuclear expansion, renewable energy, and transmission upgrades neglects crucial demand-side solutions. Energy efficiency programs and distributed energy resources can reduce demand during peak periods, enhancing reliability and lowering costs.

Additionally, the bill places an undue burden on the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) to staff the task force without providing adequate resources. This unfunded mandate could hinder the task force's effectiveness. The exclusion of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Power Plant Research Program further limits the task force's scope and expertise.

For these reasons, MEA urges the committee to issue an **unfavorable report**.

Our sincere thanks for your consideration of this testimony. For questions or additional information, please contact Megan Outten, Policy manager, at megan.outten@maryland.gov or 443.842.1780.

HB1218_Information_PSC.pdf

Uploaded by: Frederick Hoover

Position: INFO

FREDERICK H. HOOVER, JR.
CHAIR

MICHAEL T. RICHARD
KUMAR P. BARVE
BONNIE A. SUCHMAN



PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Chair C.T. Wilson
Economic Matters Committee
230 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 1218 – Information – Construction and Expansion of Transmission Lines and Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland

Dear Chair Wilson and Committee Members:

The Public Service Commission (the Commission) provides the following informational comments on House Bill 1218 (HB 1218) for your consideration.

House Bill 1218 establishes a Task Force to Develop a Realistic Electricity Plan for Maryland to study and make recommendations on the State's current and future electricity needs under various scenarios by prohibiting the Public Service Commission (the Commission) from approving the construction or expansion of transmission lines in the State from July 1, 2025, through May 1, 2026 and requires the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 31, 2025. In particular, the bill provides that the task force will consider policy options and make recommendations for future legislation to address the reliability and adequacy of electricity available to Maryland ratepayers, including options for reducing dependence on imports. The bill provides that the task force will be composed of representatives from State agencies, one of which agencies named is the Maryland Public Service Commission, with the Commission representative to be designated by the Chair.

The uncodified language in Section 2 prohibits the Commission from approving the construction or expansion of transmission lines in the State from July 1, 2025, through May 1, 2026. Section 3 states that the bill shall take effect July 1, 2025 and remain effective until the end of June 30, 2026. Because statutes only operate prospectively, this language, if enacted, would not apply to transmission project applications already under consideration for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) at the Commission. For other projects, however, for which a CPCN has not been applied for prior to the effective date of the statute, if enacted, the legislature is free to restrict the issuance of CPCN. The proposed legislation could however risk the exercise of federal (i.e. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) backstop siting authority for projects ordered by the regional transmission association (PJM), but cannot be authorized by the State.

The bill's requirements should not impose a significant financial impact on the Commission, however, given the State's current resource adequacy problems, including constrained transmission, rising electric demand forecasts, and recent generation retirements, a moratorium on certifying new transmission could exacerbate electric reliability problems for Maryland.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide informational testimony on HB 1218. Please contact the Commission's Director of Legislative Affairs, Christina M. Ochoa, christina.ochoa1@maryland.gov, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Frederick H. Hoover". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "F" and "H".

Frederick H. Hoover, Chair
Maryland Public Service Commission